

Last year, I asked Katelyn to take charge of improving safety and medication standards in the thoroughbred racing industry. Even as a national publication was calling to end this sport altogether, Katelyn assembled owners, trainers, jockeys, breeders, and fans to preserve Kentucky's signature industry.

This is a long list of accomplishments. Yet it is only a short summary of Katelyn's impact on my team and our Commonwealth. She has set very high standards. She has helped everyone achieve them.

We are certainly going to miss her around here, but I am sure her husband Eric and their new daughter Alice are looking forward to seeing a bit more of her every day.

So, Katelyn, thank you for your ability, for your friendship. I wish you and your family all the best.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

COVID-19 HATE CRIMES ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 937, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 13, S. 937, a bill to facilitate the expedited review of COVID-19 hate crimes, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Connecticut.

NOMINATION OF VANITA GUPTA

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I feel very privileged to be here today to speak on behalf of Vanita Gupta, a dedicated public servant who is devoted, deeply devoted, to equal justice, civil rights, and the rule of law.

I have seen firsthand, and I know I am not the only one who has done so, her consummate dedication to the integrity of the Department of Justice, which is so vital to be restored at this moment in our history.

The support for her reflects a broad, professionally and ideologically diverse coalition of individuals and organizations that know she is eminently qualified to be Associate Attorney General.

When she is confirmed, she will not only be the first civil rights lawyer but also the first woman of color to serve as Associate Attorney General.

She is, in effect, the leader we need in that position now. And we need it

right now. The Attorney General needs her right now. He has said so. And we should be proud to confirm this eminently qualified woman. Hers is the character that the Department of Justice requires to help restore trust and credibility.

Now, the fact is that she has been a target of a smear campaign, a vial and despicable campaign of lies and deception that are completely unfounded. These attacks are based on demonstrable lies and mischaracterizations.

Her previous tenure in the civil rights division makes absolutely clear her commitment to enforcing the law with integrity and honesty, with balance and insight. She has a proven record as a consensus builder and as a leader.

And her work with law enforcement is the reason why she has such support among law enforcement leaders, and that support is across party lines. In fact, every major law enforcement organization refers and supports her nomination.

Try as they might, unfortunately, our Republican colleagues continue to smear her. She has never—she has never called for defunding the police. She has never said many of the lies that are attributed to her. And even more than being unfounded, these attacks are really the height of hypocrisy. It is unconscionable that Republicans would criticize this lifelong public servant and Justice Department veteran after they silently sat by when there was no Senate-confirmed Associate Attorney General for nearly 3 years during the Trump administration. The outrage that they feign should fall on deaf ears.

Our moment of reckoning is soon. It is not just our moment of reckoning; it is a moment of reckoning for the Nation because, in the last year, we have faced a global pandemic. We have grappled with racial justice issues that have been ignored for too long, and we have defended against an onslaught of hate and extremism.

We are at a pivotal moment. We urgently need her kind of leadership to combat domestic terrorism, extremist violence, and hate crimes. In fact, we are in the midst right now of considering a measure that will help combat hate crimes, including my No Hate legislation. We know hate crimes are surging, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have been the target of them, particularly the alarming wave of vitriolic attacks most recently.

Vanita Gupta has been a leader in the fight against hate crimes. As the head of the civil rights division, she was the Nation's chief civil rights enforcer and prosecutor. And while leading that division, she also headed the first prosecutions under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which expanded the Federal hate crime law to include, among other things, crimes motivated by a victim's sexual orientation—crimes motivated by whom a person loved.

During her confirmation hearing, she committed to using the Department of Justice tools to investigate and prosecute hate crimes where they happen and to use its bully pulpit to prevent hate from festering in communities around the country.

The plain truth is that Vanita Gupta is the right person at the right time for this job. The Senate should confirm her as supremely qualified for this eminently important assignment, and it should do so swiftly with bipartisan support.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I am feeling a sense of *deja vu* this morning. In March, Democrats used reconciliation to pass a massive, partisan bill that served as a cover for a collection of payoffs to Democratic interest groups in Democratic States.

Now, just over a month later, we are facing the prospect of round 2. Democrats are once again looking at reconciliation to pass a massive, partisan piece of legislation that serves to cover a long wish list of liberal priorities. The subject this time, of course, is infrastructure—like COVID relief, a subject that Republicans are very ready to tackle, but, just like with their COVID bill, Democrats aren't showing a lot of interest in bipartisan cooperation. Once again, their message seems to be "Go along with everything we want or be completely excluded from any part of this bill."

As I said, Republicans would be happy to take up infrastructure legislation. Our Nation is overdue for additional infrastructure investment. But an infrastructure bill should be focused on actual infrastructure: roads, bridges, airports, waterways, and digital infrastructure like broadband.

Democrats have some of that in their bill, but they also have been very busy expanding the definition of "infrastructure" to include a whole host of Democratic priorities. One Democratic Senator tweeted:

Paid leave is infrastructure. Childcare is infrastructure. Caregiving is infrastructure.

Well, actually, no, they are not. Neither is the Civilian Climate Corps or community colleges or support for Big Labor. None of those things are infrastructure.

Now, it may be that some—and I say "some"—of Democrats' noninfrastructure proposals are things that we should have a discussion about here in Congress, a bipartisan discussion, but they are not infrastructure, and they